

CHILTON COUNTY

Honorable Rhonda J. Hardesty

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Pat Seales
Pam Jones
Ron Kendall
Curtis Smith
Mike Bearden
Deena Pregno
M.L. "Red" Turnipseed
Billy Wayne Fulmer

Randall Houston
Elizabeth Huntley
Kathy Crouthers
Melody Crawford
Nanci Scarpulla
Cheryl C. Maddox
Karen Easterling
Kay Massler
Mildred H. Ellison
Carl Allen Wyatt

Hal Taylor
Ludean Hicks
Janice Hull
Richard Moore
Janet Gullege
David Kard
Ronnie Mitchell
Winifred Adams



PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Substance abuse programs
2. Public transportation
3. Children must be safe in their homes

Issues

Issues are the primary concerns or problems facing children in the county.

Health - Children's (0 - 19)

physical and mental well-being in the county.

Transportation

Policy Council Action Steps:

- state DHR funds help J.A.R.C. transit for county
- county DHR provides vouchers for gasoline in medical emergencies
- county DHR utilizes volunteers and case AIDs to transport clients
- Mental health and DHR has case AIDs that provide transportation to persons that have an open case file and meet their needs assessment

County wide medical coverage for children

Policy Council Action Steps:

- each agency to continue to provide enrollment forms for All Kids insurance
- DHR, Mental Health and juvenile probation makes referrals or assists parents in application for Medicaid
- Medicaid gives vouchers for gasoline to help parents provide medical care on a limited basis

Health care for seniors with custody of children

Policy Council Action Steps:

- emergency assistant center pay for medicine on a one time basis
- DHR makes referrals to The Lions Club for eye care needs.
- DHR and Mental Health assist in Social Security registration for benefits to adults caring for grandchildren, great-grandchildren, etc...
- The Shepherd Center is open to assist in counseling, parenting classes and generally assist in location of help to limited income homes.

Safety - Children live free of abuse, neglect, crime, and drugs.

Drug & Alcohol free homes

Policy Council Action Steps:

- drug education programs are sponsored by Chilton Shelby Mental Health, the Court Referral Office and Alabama Family Resource Center
- DHR provides in-home services that assist families with substance abuse problems, such as Family Options and The Alabama Family Resource counselors
- all agencies promote public information of services provided in Chilton County by making referrals to The Shepherd Center, DHR, and Mental Health
- court referral officer monitor and provide classes to youth and adults

Drug Education

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Mental Health has C.A.R.E. prevention programs in area schools
- Child intervention programs can be provided while parents attend parenting classes

Child protection within the home

Policy Council Action Steps:

- continue to works towards a "Child Protect" interview room in Shepherd Center to perform interviews on suspected abuse cases and better allow DHR to have a full picture of safety issues in the home
- Child Protect to continue to provide service for sexual abuse interviews
- DHR works within families and provides services to keep the children in their home safely

- Family Options go into the home of local agency clients to monitor and assist with safety issues

Education - Children

learn the skills necessary to become productive citizens.

Drop out rate decrease

Policy Council Action Steps:

- mentoring programs from Chilton Coalition is helping tutor children that are in danger of failing
- G.E.D. classes are taught both day and evening
- vocational education program is helping low functioning persons become productive, working citizens

Reading proficiency

Policy Council Action Steps:

- mentoring programs
- K-4 after school programs
- Project Gear Neighborhood after school program
- YMCA has a grant for tutoring children after school and during summer months while children are without a structured environment

Early Care and

Education - Children (0 – 5) are provided opportunities to fully develop emotionally, socially, physically, and cognitively and are ready to succeed.

Teen pregnancy prevention

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Invite board of education, Single Parent Coordinator, to join policy council to better support her efforts to help teens who are pregnant and glean what areas of support are needed in our county.
- continue to monitor local Health Department statistics on teen pregnancy and support the health fair where information is offered to local teens and their families
- local inter agency council and church organizations are in support of a religion based pregnancy center

Child care for working mothers

Policy Council Action Steps:

- state DHR provides monies to child care management agencies to help assist in day care of children
- invite Boys & Girls club organization to our meetings to consider membership here of after school study activity of children. Cost would be \$5.00 per child. Alabama Family Resource Center is exploring this as well
- day care is provided to teens that remain in school by State DHR funds and some vouchers from the board of education

Economic Security

- Children grow up in a financially stable home where the child's basic needs can be met.

Job training programs

Policy Council Action Steps:

- DHR still has the J.O.B.S. program
- local industries, CRH, KMA and merchants promote low skilled labor training

Child support

Policy Council Action Steps:

- local DHR is actively seeking child support payment and had record breaking collections this quarter
- DHR is vigorously working with the DA's office and law enforcement to pursue absentee parents
- paternity testing through the courts is done twice each month to establish paternity and start the child support payment process

Parent Involvement and Skills - Parents and

guardians participation and effectiveness in fostering an environment for children to become mature, responsible and independent adults.

Parenting classes

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Alabama Family Resource Center is host to parenting classes at the Shepherd Center
- Chilton/Shelby Mental Health is looking into parent drug awareness classes for understanding and becoming aware of teens abusing substances

Parent support information

Policy Council Action Steps:

- DHR makes referral to Family Options for in-home services support
- utilized the Bradford public information officer or other agency speakers
- local PTA's have great involvement in the education of children and provide support to parents with special needs children
- The Shepherd Center has information to help parents locate help for their family needs

Policy Recommendation

1. Based on current policy, DHR can not recommend custody of a child to a relative without finger print clearance, even with NCIC records and if a Judge and the child's guardian ad litem are in agreement. This policy needs to be revisited because it hinders permanency for children.
2. More State funds released for Children's Policy Councils to hire directors to help in locating and funding new programs for each county.ch home county
3. State to trim some of the State level positions in Children's Programs to allow more monies to be released to the county level.
4. State Multi-Needs be granted more funding to assist with hard to place children.
5. State Mental Health/Mental Retardation to provide more funding and increase licensure of placements for very low functioning MR children.